

## Pink Perceptions

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Category: Halo

Genre: Humor

Language: English

Status: Completed

Published: 2007-06-08 00:33:02

Updated: 2007-06-08 00:33:02

Packaged: 2016-04-27 00:05:50

Rating: K

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,646

Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

Summary: Red vs Blue. After chasing O'Malley out of Caboose, Tex and Church begin a quest to verify his death, a quest which reveals a the answer to a burning question: what does Blood Gulch look like from inside Donut's head?

## Pink Perceptions

**\*\*Pinkish Perceptions\*\***

\_By Ptath\_

\_Beta-ed by Thalia\_

\_\*\*Disclaimer\*\*\_: We do not own RvB or Halo. Even if we could, simple self-preservation would dictate we stay far, far away.

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\_\*\*Rating: \*\*\_\_PG-13 for language.\_

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The sound of gunfire slowly fell away in the cavernous expanse that was Caboose's mind.

"Huh, he disappeared," Church muttered to himself, his head cocked to one side. "I expected, like, an echoing laugh or the smell of brimstone at the very least." The white private continued to stare at the spot O'Malley had once occupied. "I don't smell any kind of stone," he announced. "Don't you think that's weird, Tex? Tex?"

When no reply came, Church spun on his heel and looked around. "Tex?"

Where'd you go?"

A hand suddenly smacked him upside the head.

"What are you dawdling around for, cockbite?" Tex demanded in a rough voice. "We're not done, you idiot."

"What do you mean we're not done? He's gone! You saw it!"

"I can see that he's not here," the mercenary corrected, a tense edge to her voice. "He could have jumped out of Caboose at the last second. We need to check the Reds."

"The Reds? Oh, hell no," Church snapped back. "I've had it up to here with having to possess nutjobs," he said, raising his hand to his chest, palm pointing to the ground. "And let me tell you, the Reds qualify as nutjobs."

"Fine," Tex snapped back. "Then while you're struggling to find your way out of Caboose's head, I'll just go steal your body and do it myself. And don't think I won't make it so that you can't get into Lopez while I'm gone."

"Fuck," Church muttered, glaring at Tex from behind his visor. This wasn't fair. He'd been a ghost a lot longer than Tex had. So how the hell had she managed to figure out so much more than him?

"Well?" the mercenary demanded, grossing her arms over her chest and tapping a foot impatiently.

"Fine," Church grouched. "The sooner we do this, the sooner we're done." His lips twisted into a bitter smile, he continued. "How do we get out of here, anyways?"

Tex smirked at the other soldier. She knew he was going to hate this. "The same way O'Malley did," she said in a mockingly sweet voice.

"What do youâ€¦oh, hell no," Church muttered as comprehension sank in. Tex merely laughed and raised her gun.

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"I hate you," Church snapped as he and Tex ran towards the Red Base.

"Aw, that's so sweet," Tex mocked.

"Shut up, bitch," the other ghost muttered. He glanced up at the rapidly approaching base, and then at Tex. "Alright, since you're the one with the master plan, what do we do when we get to the base?"

"We jump into the first Red we come across, make sure O'Malley isn't there and move on to the next Red."

"Great, we're getting a grand tour of psycho central, one no doubt filled with visions of decapitated Blues and mutilated corpses."

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"Donut, get out," Sarge finally growled.

"What? But Sarge, I wanna help!"

"You can help later, pinky-pants! This stage of the operation is incredibly complex and the slightest distraction will result in the death of both of our subjects." Sarge blushed slightly under his helmet. "Uh, I mean patients, of course."

"Fine," the pink soldier finally huffed and stomped from the room.

Sarge watched his exit with narrowed eyes. When the door to the first aid room finally slammed shut, he sighed and gently laid down the tools he held in his hands. Reaching up, he undid the clasps to his helmet and tossed it to one side.

He looked down at the two motionless forms on the cold tables. He hadn't bothered to remove any of the armor except the torso armor. It was enough of a hassle to remove one's own armor conscious. Prying it off two limp bodies would take too much time â€" time Grif didn't have.

"Damn it, Grif," he muttered as he grabbed the tools once more. "Only you could cause this much trouble." Despite his harsh words, however, his hands were gentle and sure of themselves as he set to work.

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Tex hissed as one of the Reds came stomping out of the base.

"That's the bitch that killed me," she snarled.

"Wow, easy, Tex. We're here looking for O'Malley, remember? You can kill 'im later," Church said hastily.

"Fine," Tex snapped. "Now get moving."

"Ladies first," came Church's glib reply.

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Church and Tex stood in stunned silence at the scene playing out in front of them.

"I changed my mind," Church said in a slightly frightened voice. "This is much scarier than any Blue massacre."

"I don't think we have to worry about O'Malley being here," Tex stuttered, her eyes wide.

Both Spartans were staring at Blood Gulch. Or rather, Donut's version of the boxed canyon. The grass was thick and green, and covered with thousands of colorful wildflowers. Birds were singing merrily, and various small, cute woodland creatures could be seen frolicking here and there. There was a wide, sparkling river running down one side of

the canyon, around which a large group was gathered.

"Are they playing?" Church asked after a moment. When Tex didn't answer, the ghost found his feet walking, taking him closer to the cheerfully shouting voices. After a moment, Tex fell into step beside him.

As they got closer, they could see a large wooden table set up under an old oak tree. An older woman was seated on one of the benches, knitting what appeared to be an afghan while watching over everyone with a kindly eye. There was a large brown dog and a smaller black cat sitting at her feet and a young girl one that looked to be in her mid-teens setting out lunch and casting envious glances at the group running along the side of the river.

"Now, Richelle," the older woman chided in a gentle voice, "you can join the others after lunch."

"But Franklin's teaching them a new game," the girl whined. "He always comes up with the best games. Like the one where he was a super spy and had to rescue the princess!"

"After lunch," the woman insisted. She glanced over at the laughing group and set her knitting needles down in her lap. "Franklin, it's time for lunch! Christie, could you run and fetch Trudi and Don?" A small, shy looking girl nodded quickly and took off, hands clutching at her skirt.

Tex began to snicker.

Church sputtered. "Christie? Christie? Is that supposed to be me?"

"And there's Tucker," Tex laughed, pointing towards "Trudi", a small, slender girl with large, vulnerable eyes and mousy brown hair. She was walking towards the table hand in hand with "Don". "Who appears to be going out with Doc," the mercenary finished before doubling over with laughter.

"Isn't this is how, Tex? Even Caboose didn't get everyone so wrong!"

"Well, it's not like Franklin has had that much contact with Blue Team," Tex offered, still laughing. "You should be glad he got your names as close as he did."

Church stared in horror. "I'm in a skirt!" He wailed in an aghast voice.

The group was now assembling for lunch, with the matron of the group was proceeding over with a kindly eye.

"Thank you, Miss Sascha," a large, handsome boy said happily as she handed him a fully laden plate.

"You're quite welcome, Caboose," Miss Sascha replied with a beaming smile. She turned to the other boys. "Did you have fun, Dexter?"

The largest of the boys beamed at her. "Of course! I'm Frank's best friend, so I get the best parts!"

"He always gives me the worst parts," the last boy snapped. He had black hair and surly expression.

"I'm sorry, Tex," Franklin replied, his blue eyes wide in sudden sorrow. "You're just really good at playing the scary villain, a lot better than anyone else! If I gave you another role, someone else would have to be the bad guy, the game wouldn't be nearly as much fun! We couldn't do this without you." His eyes began to water. "But if you don't want to be the villain any more, that's ok!"

"Yeah, I'll be the bad guy," Dexter offered, his eyes also wide. "You can be Frank's sidekick instead of me!"

It was Church's turn to burst out laughing. "Looks like he has you pegged really well," he gasped between chuckles. He and Tex had hidden themselves behind a large rock to keep from being noticed. Tex clutched at her rifle, her jaw working dangerously as she envisioned the innumerable tortures she could inflict on her killer.

"Come on," Church wheezed, "if we don't go soon, we'll get infected by all this sap. We're looking for O'Malley, right?"

Tex snarled again before spinning on her heel and stalking away from the now-singing group eating a large lunch under an old oak tree.

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